



Evidence + Engagement:

A New Research Partnership for DC Education

District of Columbia Research-Practice Partnership Proposal

Submitted to the District of Columbia Office of the State
Superintendent of Education

10 February 2020



February 7, 2020

To DC Colleagues:

On behalf of my colleagues in the senior leadership of The George Washington University, I am delighted to submit our proposal to lead the new DC Education Research-Practice Partnership.

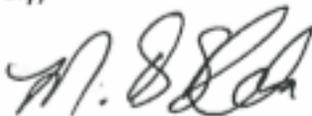
With our consortium of partners – internationally renowned for their expertise in the development and application of objective, independent, and useful research evidence to inform educational improvement – we commit to work with DC leaders, educators, families, and community stakeholders to improve teaching and learning and to advance equity of opportunity and outcomes for all DC children.

GW—acting as the consortium’s leadership hub—has over almost two centuries built a foundation for the advancement of knowledge in the public interest. Our capacities are bolstered by a passion for progress and a commitment to social, economic, and educational improvement in our city. Today we are ready for the great opportunity before us, and offer a unique blend of experience and scholarship to ensure a stable and productive partnership with the District.

The university is home to world-class experts across the multiple disciplines and fields relevant to educational improvement. Joining the Graduate School of Education and Human Development will be faculty and students in public health, public policy, data analytics, and other specialties.

GW has been a civic cornerstone of the District since 1821 by continually focusing on the development and maintenance of strong and productive relationships with the local community. We would be honored to support the District in one of its most important and noble priorities, namely the continuous improvement of education for all our children and families.

Sincerely,



M. Brian Blake, Ph.D.
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

February 7, 2020

C/o: District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education

To OSSE Colleagues:

Please find attached the GWU proposal to support the DC Education Research Practitioner Partnership. We are pleased to have the opportunity to bring together the collective strengths of our Consortium on behalf of public education in the District.

Should you have any questions of a programmatic nature, please contact me at elizabethgrant@gwu.edu or 202-994-3993. All other questions or correspondence concerning the proposal may be sent to the attention of Sylvia Ezekilova, Associate Director of Sponsored Projects at osr@gwu.edu.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Grant, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Graduate School of Education and Human Development
The George Washington University
2134 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20052

Sent with the authorization of:



Sylvia Ezekilova

Interim Director, Sponsored Projects

2/7/2020

Date

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Executive Summary

Our Commitment

We are a Consortium of George Washington University (GW), American Institutes for Research (AIR), Child Trends, Howard University, and Policy Studies Associates (PSA). Led by GW, these five organizations came together because we share a vision and a mission. Our vision, like that of the District of Columbia, is that every DC student in preschool through grade 12, regardless of background or Ward, will have access to a high-quality public school education. Our mission is to serve the people of the District, where our organizations have deep roots and strong educational relationships. We believe we can fulfill this mission through a research-practice partnership (RPP or Partnership)¹ that not only conducts rigorous, independent research but also works together with DC educators, policymakers, parents, and community members to use evidence to improve teaching and learning and advance equity of opportunity and outcomes for all DC children.

We are committed to an RPP model which recognizes that researchers must do more than produce and disseminate evidence. RPP effectiveness requires turning research into tools, training, supports, strategies, and ultimately programs and policies that will catalyze improvement. Specifically, we create a process for researchers to engage with practitioners and other key stakeholders to ensure that research evidence is relevant, accessible, and useful, and to build the capacity of these stakeholders to use research evidence for improvement.

What We Bring to the Partnership

The Consortium brings a unique and potent blend of local commitment, research expertise, stability, and independence that makes it an excellent fit for the DC RPP.

First, we are committed to improving education and life in the District. All of the Consortium organizations have longstanding local campuses or offices and on-site research expertise. GW and Howard have enriched the educational, economic, and cultural life of the District, and educated hundreds of teachers and leaders currently working in District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and the District’s public charter schools. We understand the unique governance needs, strengths, and challenges of DC’s education sector because each Consortium organization has worked extensively with DCPS and public charter schools, education agencies, and other DC government agencies, as well as with other urban districts and states. Many examples of this work are detailed later in this proposal.

Second, our team brings deep and broad expertise in diverse and complementary research fields. The Consortium has a combined education research capacity of over 200 experts, including some of the nation’s most respected education scholars. Within our member organizations are researchers with expertise that spans from early childhood education to college and career readiness and workforce transitions, and from instructional practice to education policy. Our team includes experts with a career-long focus on diverse populations of students; children’s social, emotional, and health needs; curriculum and instruction; and the socio-economic contexts of schooling. Our researchers—many of whom have

¹ Following the language of the NOI, we use the term “entity” to refer to the George Washington University, including its constituent schools. The “Consortium” means the five organizations—GW, AIR, Child Trends, Howard University, and PSA—that constitute our collaboration. “RPP” and “Partnership” refer to the larger collaborations among the Consortium, the District of Columbia, the RPP Advisory Committee, and other stakeholders.

served in schools or districts—conduct rigorous quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and continuous improvement research. Through our members’ collaborative work from the local to the national (and global) levels, we know how to make research relevant to practical challenges and communicate our findings respectfully and clearly.

Third, our Consortium offers exceptional stability. As lead partner, GW’s Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD) will contribute the institutional structures and resources of a world-class research university, along with a Consortium executive director and staff. Each Consortium member has a long history of collaboration in DC, as outlined later, and all have committed to contributing funding to the partnership. In addition, we have a long track record of successful partnership with leading philanthropic organizations that support education and research.

Fourth, all Consortium members have demonstrated neutrality and independence. They have done so across hundreds of education research projects and partnerships. We know how to be allies of DC’s education systems *and* independent in our analyses.

What We Will Do

Our model for an RPP unites evidence and engagement. The RPP will generate evidence through high-quality, independent research and analysis that meet rigorous professional standards. Most importantly, to ensure that the research is relevant and useful for DC, we have developed a strategy for representation of and engagement with diverse stakeholders at all stages of research design, implementation, and dissemination. As explained later in this proposal, this includes collaborative work with the DC RPP Advisory Committee to develop a “learning agenda” and a 5-year research agenda.

We recognize that evidence must be accessible, credible, and communicated clearly. The RPP will work with practitioners and stakeholders to share research findings across multiple media in accessible multilingual formats and to communicate clear messages that can inform decisions. The RPP will develop practical models, websites, strategies, and tools to help practitioners translate evidence into action.

We will build the capacity of practitioners and researchers to use research. To further this key function, our model creates professional learning opportunities in which researchers and practitioners jointly make meaning of evidence, develop a shared language to discuss research, and integrate evidence with their own knowledge. We will offer facilitated convenings, workshops, instructional coaching, data systems, and other activities detailed in this proposal. As practitioners implement evidence-informed strategies, RPP members will work with them to test and continuously improve the approaches.

Our plan incorporates best practices for RPPs. GW and AIR were founding members of the National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships (NNERPP), a professional learning community for RPPs, and other Consortium members participate actively. In developing this proposal, we have consulted extensively with successful RPPs nationwide. We have confirmed participation of key Network members as advisors to our RPP.

In short, our Consortium members have designed a model that is centered on mutually beneficial collaboration and that generates objective, reliable research and data to support improvement and increased equity in the District’s public schools.

Information about the Entity and Consortium

Mission and History

The RPP Consortium is led by GW’s Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD). The mission of The George Washington University is to increase and share knowledge, which makes it a suitable home for an education RPP. GW’s current mission echoes the original goals from its founding Congressional Charter: *to educate individuals in liberal arts, languages, sciences, learned professions, and other courses and subjects of study, and to conduct scholarly research and publish the findings of such research.*

GSEHD advances GW’s mission by training teachers, school and system leaders, and school counselors and conducting research to improve instructional strategies, student achievement, and equity. Likewise, GW’s Milken Institute School of Public Health and Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration, which are also part of the RPP team, increase and share knowledge on education’s toughest challenges, including school behavioral health and school segregation.

GW, in collaboration with AIR, Child Trends, Howard University, and PSA, crafted a mission statement for the Consortium that draws on our organizations’ commonalities and extensive experience:

The mission of the Consortium is to produce rigorous, independent research and work jointly with practitioners and policymakers in the District of Columbia to use evidence to improve teaching and learning; advance educational equity; and enable children from preschool through grade 12 in all District wards to thrive academically, physically, emotionally, and socially. We recognize the District’s unique educational context and needs as well as the local expertise of leaders, educators, and families. We strive to use research and data to build a stronger system of public education that will prepare DC’s students for success in postsecondary education, careers, and life.

Importantly, this mission emphasizes the power of “and”—that we increase *and* share knowledge, we provide evidence *and* engagement, and we respect the expertise of practitioners *and* community members. Our mission focuses on the academic growth of students *and* the full range of services that schools provide to support the “whole child.” Below we describe the specific core programs of each organization and their relevance to the purpose of the proposed RPP.

George Washington University

For nearly two centuries, The George Washington University has significantly contributed to the quality of life in the District. Service to its home community is a key prong of GW’s commitment to excellence, as evidenced by these few examples of GW’s many collaborations in DC: the *GW Teach* program that prepares undergraduate STEM majors to become STEM teachers in DC schools; the *SMARTDC* tutoring program; *engageDC*, which serves DC community organizations and their clients; and the DC STEM network for student access to high-quality STEM learning experiences.

Faculty at GSEHD, the School of Public Health and the School of Public Policy possess impressive expertise in education-related research. They teach prospective school teachers and leaders and foster true practitioner-centered research through partnerships with dozens of districts and schools in the DC metro area. Hundreds of GSEHD alumni have pursued their careers within DC’s public school system. GSEHD houses research centers on Education Policy and on Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education that can contribute unique expertise in the RPP. The School of Public Health’s Center for

Health and Health Care in Schools (CHHCS) addresses child wellness, positive youth development, and school success through partnerships that bridge health and education. The Center for Washington Area Studies in the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy analyzes housing, infrastructure, segregation, transportation, and other local policy issues that often affect education.

American Institutes for Research

AIR is an independent, nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts behavioral and social science research and delivers technical assistance to school systems nationwide. AIR education expertise spans the learning lifespan from pre-K to postsecondary education and encompasses a range of topics—early child development, career and technical education, teacher preparation and performance, reading and literacy, school finance, and special education, to cite just a few. Education staff apply rigorous research and evaluation, training, and technical assistance to ensure that all students—particularly those facing the greatest disadvantages—have access to a high-quality, effective education.

Child Trends

Child Trends is the nation’s leading research organization focused exclusively on improving the lives of children and youth, especially those who are most vulnerable. To ensure that all kids thrive, Child Trends conducts independent research and partners with practitioners and policymakers to apply knowledge. The team studies children at all developmental stages from infancy to early adulthood with expertise that encompasses school climate, health, discipline, school safety, bullying, chronic absenteeism, social and emotional learning, college and workforce readiness, and many other areas.

Howard University

Howard University has contributed to the District for over 150 years as the premier historically black university in the country. The Capstone Institute at Howard University is a research, development, and technical assistance center focused on enhancing students’ academic and social-emotional outcomes at schools in urban communities or where there are large proportions of students from primarily low-income or ethnic minority backgrounds. For over 25 years, Capstone staff, as well as faculty associates and graduate students from across Howard University departments, have provided a full range of assessment and evaluation services and delivered school improvement activities, primarily in the domains of school leadership development, teacher professional development and curriculum support, classroom management, as well as student academic and social-emotional development.

Policy Studies Associates

Founded in 1982, Policy Studies Associates (PSA)—certified as a DC Small Business Enterprise—provides research and evaluation services focused on improving outcomes for children, youth, and their families to government agencies, social service agencies, and community-based organizations at the national, state and local levels. PSA aims to help its partners use evidence to make sound decisions about programs and policies. To that end, PSA researchers help leaders define and investigate core questions about policy, program planning, and effectiveness. PSA studies generate findings that contribute to the development and improvement of policies and programs that support educational achievement for all students, with a particular focus on equity and outcomes for disadvantaged students.

Period of Commitment

Our Consortium is committed to serving as the education research partner with the District of Columbia for 10 years and beyond. We are part of the local fabric of DC. GW has been a civic cornerstone of the District since 1821, and Howard University since 1867. Our youngest partner has been in DC for more

than 35 years. Each Consortium organization has worked in research partnerships that require dedicated, consistent attention and long-term collaborative relationships. With a well-earned understanding of the work required to build and sustain successful partnerships, and with anticipation of the RPP's remarkable potential, each organization has individually committed to the Partnership for no less than the next 10 years. Individual organization letters of commitment are included in Appendix A.

Financial Supports

At GW, the RPP will be surrounded by the institutional structures and resources of a top-flight research university. GW is committed to providing substantial financial support to ensure a stable partnership capable of sustaining long-term work. The University will provide administrative support and ongoing research faculty funding so that work might continue, even between periods of additional external funding. This financial commitment includes start-up funding and yearly contributions. Together, GW and Consortium partners are contributing financial support of \$310,000 annually, or more than \$3 million over the initial 10 years.

Organizational History

GW, acting as the RPP lead, has a long history of successful collaborative research with DC government and a track record of independent, objective, and non-partisan analyses to inform complex decisions by various offices responsible for DC youth. GSEHD's earlier EdCORE consortium produced five reports and facilitated multiple community forums on topics related to the evaluation of the Public Education Reform Amendment Act (PERAA) that was conducted by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences. The reports, published between 2013 and 2015, presented findings on student achievement, community and family engagement, teacher effectiveness, and the impacts of principal removal. More recently, EdCORE produced a report on the policy implications of Personalized Learning Plans in DC (2018) to inform consideration of possible pilot projects.

Today's Consortium is a new and reinforced team, with diverse institutional commitment and the benefit of wisdom gained from earlier collaborative research. Howard University and Child Trends joined the Consortium over a year ago, and the addition of GW's Schools of Public Health and Public Policy brings new talents to the table. AIR and PSA were part of the original EdCORE team; they contributed to the research conducted in 2013-2015 and informed the 2018 report. Since early 2019, our organizations have been working together, investing time and organizational resources in a collaborative structure designed to last for decades.

Consortium

The members of this Consortium—GW, AIR, Child Trends, Howard University, and PSA—include some of the most respected research institutions in the country. We have joined forces to conduct independent research and leverage our complementary strengths to improve student achievement, support whole child development, and increase educational equity in DC.

This partnership has many advantages. First, our Consortium comprises dedicated education researchers with a long track record of conducting rigorous quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and continuous improvement research, both in DC and across the country. Their methodological experience ranges from leading multi-year random control trials, to conducting iterative testing and design cycles, to working with classroom teachers as they evaluate instructional approaches. Researchers on the team are skilled at determining the most appropriate methodological approach in light of the research questions and available data. Research methods faculty at GW and Howard University teach research

methodologies and their practical application to problems of practice; and, they are available to advise on both tried-and-tested and cutting-edge research methods. The Consortium team includes experts on education for students with disabilities, LGBTQ students, homeless and foster youth, English language learners and other student groups.

Second, we are not just researchers—we are also technical assistance providers, capacity builders, and teachers. Many of us have worked as teachers, principals, curriculum specialists, special educators, school-based providers, or English-language instructors. We use our professional experience to guide research and produce reports and tools for educators, families, community members and policymakers.

Third, our members have extensive experience working side-by-side with practitioners and system leaders in a variety of settings, particularly urban education systems. AIR has led research alliances among state- and district-level partners in the Midwest and other areas of the country for decades as a lead on federal Regional Education Labs (RELs). PSA is leading the federal Comprehensive Center for this region, providing capacity-building assistance to OSSE and school districts. Howard University has worked with OSSE for more than five years to implement Math Science Partnership programs with several elementary and middle schools. GW's CHHCS is partnering with DC's Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) and OSSE on the implementation of school behavioral health services and supports. For the last five years, Child Trends has partnered with OSSE to implement and evaluate a school climate technical assistance protocol in District schools.

Fourth, we are organized to take advantage of individual strengths while harnessing our collective capacities. Across our five organizations, we have expertise spanning nearly every aspect of the school environment. The span of our expertise is represented in our Education Research Skills matrix in Appendix B. This breadth allows us to build interdisciplinary project teams that will examine challenges comprehensively—looking at students' academic growth along with their health, safety and wellbeing. For example, building from our expertise and partnerships in special education and health sciences, we can address the complex challenges affecting optimal development and learning, such as adverse childhood experiences, poverty-related risk factors, chronic medical conditions, and developmental disabilities. Children and families in DC face many of these challenges, and our coordinated, multidisciplinary approach is key to problem solving and improving outcomes.

Finally, as further described in the Knowledge and Experience section below, our five organizations have done an immense amount of work with the DC education sector. This broad expertise means that we know DC's education ecosystem, from its urban character to its governance structure and its 67 LEAs. Our local networks demonstrate how effectively we connect with partners and work collaboratively.

At the core, we are an appropriately lean RPP team capable of scaling to meet the demands of the research agenda. Outstanding colleagues and partners provide substantial support, diversity, and research bench strength. While we can tap an array of talent, our administrative structure is simple. The District's point of contact for the RPP team is GW, and there rests the accountability also. This Consortium structure, with a small administrative team and over 200 experts, gives the RPP focus and range while offering flexibility to meet specific needs.

Vision for the District RPP

Evidence + Engagement

Our Consortium’s commitment is that every student—no matter their background or which Ward they live in—will have access to a high-quality public school education that supports their academic, physical, and social-emotional needs. We are confident that a powerful research-practice partnership, built around *evidence* and *engagement*, can help us get there. In our vision, a successful RPP gathers *evidence* that is relevant, trusted, and useful to practitioners and other stakeholders, and *engages* with stakeholders to understand and use that evidence to inform decision making.

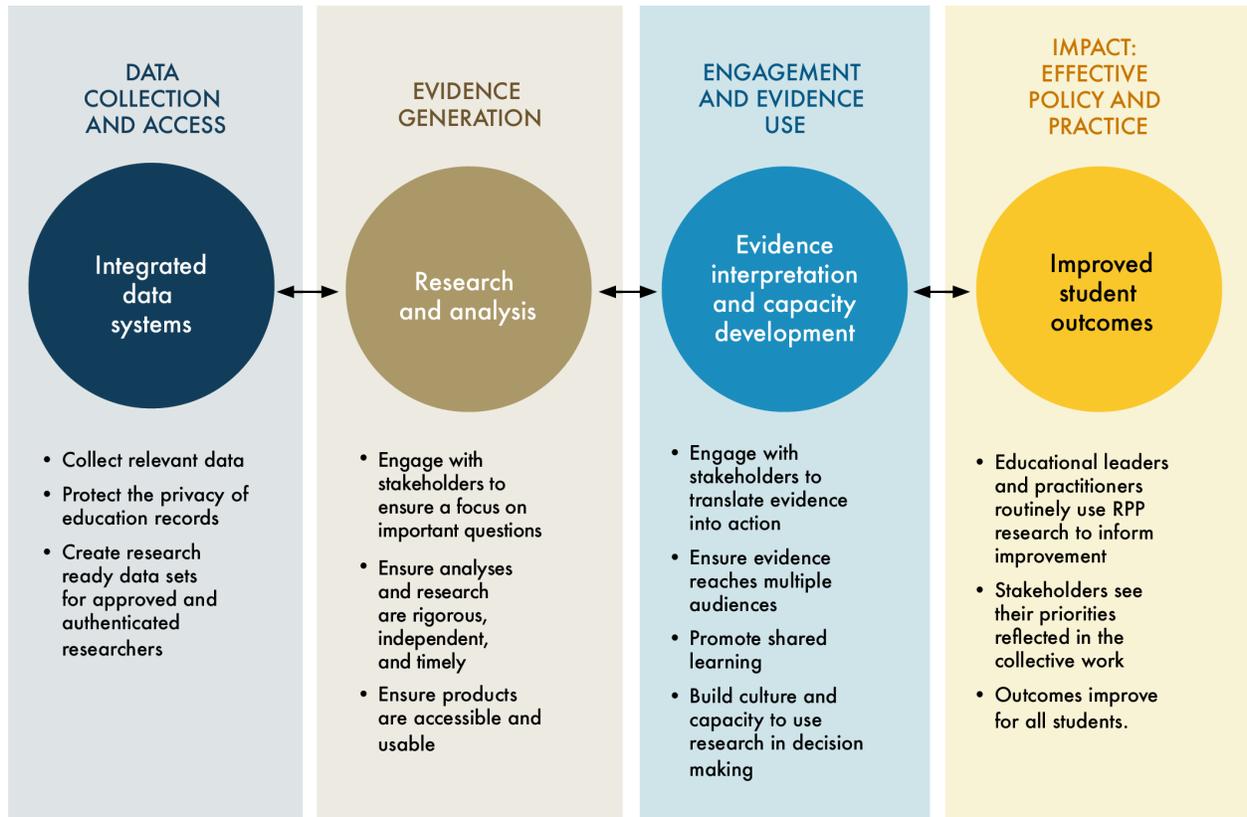
An essential best practice for an RPP is creating meaningful engagement at every stage of the work. On the front end, Consortium researchers and stakeholders will work together to determine the District’s needs and co-create a research agenda that is responsive to those needs. To increase transparency and collaboration, we will publish online our research plans and study results. To refine and improve the research and ensure findings are framed within the local context, researchers will seek and use feedback from leaders, educators, and community members. As evidence emerges, ongoing engagement opens the door to learning. The RPP will establish avenues and formats for engagement around research that are accessible and useful to practitioners, leaders, and policymakers. Finally, we will share data, and data expertise, with education agencies so that they have the option to use research-ready data sets to further their research needs and interests.

Figure 1 (next page) shows the approach and activities that underlie this vision. In a back-and-forth, iterative process the RPP will 1) integrate data systems and prepare research-ready data sets; 2) engage with stakeholders to ensure a focus on important questions and generate evidence through high-quality, independent research; 3) engage with stakeholders in translating evidence into action; and 4) help education leaders and practitioners routinely use evidence to inform effective policy and practice.

As researchers and practitioners engage within the same network, they become trusted sources of information for one another, to their mutual benefit. In our ultimate vision, researchers will collaborate with practitioners to explore effective solutions to the problems they face, so that research reflects practical needs, school contexts, and community concerns. Similarly, practitioners will not only have access to usable evidence attuned to their specific needs and challenges, but can collaborate with researchers as they use this evidence to revise instructional strategies, decide on interventions, improve existing programs, and advance equity. Policymakers will have research information that is sufficiently focused to help them make decisions that must be made today, not years from now when all the final data is in.

As a team, we have designed a Step-by-Step Research Process (Appendix C) that will guide Consortium operating practices. Below we elaborate on two core activities—evidence generation and engagement.

Figure 1. RPP Evidence + Engagement Approach



Evidence

The integrity of an RPP rests on its ability to provide evidence that is trusted and reliable. Our Consortium is committed to research that is *high-quality*, in that it conforms to rigorous scholarly standards, and *independent*, in that our methods, analysis, and findings are objective and nonpartisan. Consortium researchers will commit to our Statement of Independence (Appendix D) that confirms their neutrality and high professional standards.

Our Consortium is built around nationally recognized scholars and researchers with subject matter and methodological expertise. They serve as leads and team members on rigorous studies for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), National Science Foundation (NSF), NIH’s National Institute for Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIH-NIMHD), Human Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and National Institute for Justice (NIJ). They contribute to their fields by writing for or editing peer-reviewed journals. They are, by training and desire, rigorous and balanced in their approach to inquiry, as documented in their CVs in Appendix M.

Consortium researchers are also skilled at crafting clear, actionable messages, models, guides, and tools—products that people and agencies can pick up and use. Examples of such tools include an online tool (<http://actionguide.healthinschools.org/>) that provides practical information, templates and examples for building and sustaining school-connected initiatives (GW); a research-based self-study guide to help districts create principal pipelines that is currently used in 90 districts (PSA); and, a tool for school leaders (see Appendix L) to help them select a whole school behavioral framework from among the many available to DC schools (GW).

RPP research can be as simple as a descriptive study or as complex as a multi-year evaluation. However, to “build knowledge for local impact,” as one RPP veteran explained, it is important to create an accumulation of work and work products around a few focus areas. Single studies are useful, yet a narrow finding is often hard to apply. Instead, by conducting a series of studies within a single focus area, researchers and practitioners can stitch together the evidence to create a local body of knowledge that can, for example, be turned into a guiding set of principles for decision making. As a Consortium we lean toward building evidence cumulatively, over multiple studies, in ways that help leaders think about how to design a state or district program or how to target an intervention. Whatever the method, our commitment to protecting individual privacy will remain paramount in analysis and reporting.

Engagement

Engagement is the “secret sauce” that distinguishes a true RPP from traditional research. More and more, researchers are seeing that the evidence they produce will rarely if ever find its way into use on its own. There is no magic formula on “use,” but substantial progress has been made in understanding the conditions in which evidence influences practice and policy in any field (Best & Holmes, 2010; Boaz & Nutley, 2019). We do know, however, that relationships of sharing, partnerships, and networks play a key role in fostering evidence use.

We have designed our plans for engagement around best practices of RPPs nationally. In a successful partnership, researchers and practitioners work together for years and build trusting relationships that make collaboration productive. As shown in Figure 1 above, this means engaging with stakeholders in joint work to translate evidence into action, ensure evidence reaches multiple audiences, promote shared learning, and build culture and capacity to use research and evidence in decision making.

Building capacity for evidence use starts early. Our first activities will be to gather input and ideas from multiple stakeholders through interviews, focus groups, and topic forums (both in person and online) and by actively attending to the issues raised in Advisory Committee meetings or other District gatherings. Listening and learning will continue throughout the life of each research project. As described in our Research Process (Appendix C), research teams will identify stakeholders and invite early conversations and feedback regarding research goals and process. In addition, our team has committed to using an “equity lens” in research design and practice, as described in Appendix E. This equity statement has a strong community emphasis that will shape early and ongoing interactions.

As part of the “no surprises” policy, when projects have completed enough analysis to understand the “storyline,” the lead researchers will present the preliminary findings to DC agency staff and senior leaders and obtain feedback on the analysis, interpretation, and framing. An important function of this “early findings” meeting is to begin the process of making meaning and understanding the implications of the findings. At each step, we are connecting research with practice and cultivating that capacity.

Other activities to support evidence use include developing an easy-to-navigate RPP website listing current research projects, findings, and tools; building an online feature to give stakeholders a simple way to ask questions about the research evidence on an issue; and holding topic-specific meetings for the public. These are by no means the only forms of engagement we will pursue. We recognize that part of our listening, planning, and adjusting process will result in new ways to engage with stakeholders that we haven’t yet considered. We believe this flexibility and responsiveness itself is a way to foster trust.

Partnership Structure

The DC RPP will enter a landscape of multiple education institutions. As a current partner to many of these institutions, we know that collegiality and professionalism will help build working relationships and increase our ability to contribute. As a good neighbor that respects boundaries, we will work with the education sector to establish clear RPP roles and responsibilities and formal communication channels with partner organizations and stakeholders. The RPP's primary connections will be with OSSE, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME), and the Advisory Committee. As described in the RPP Act, our role is to conduct independent education-related research that will support improvement in the District's public and public charter schools and report publicly. Through the activities described below, we will meet the Partnership expectations and responsibilities in the RPP Act and the NOI (see Section 2.1.3) relating to independence, research quality, communication, collaboration with the Advisory Committee, and data privacy.

The Research Process (Appendix C) lays out the steps each project will take to obtain input from education agencies, the Advisory Committee, and our internal review team throughout the life of the project. First, research teams will obtain OSSE approval for each project, undergo review by the Consortium's Research Review Group, follow the expectations of the independence and equity statements, and post research plans on the RPP website to record intent before the research begins. We will also publish information on the financial contributions given to support research and RPP operations.

Second, the Consortium's Research Review Group will oversee scholarly research standards and quality assurance. The Review Group will approve the original research plan and methodology, check in regularly with the research team during the research, and review the penultimate draft to evaluate its evidence, framing, clarity, organization, and implications. Importantly, the Review Group will oversee implementation of our research equity goals and ensure that the research uses an equity lens. This approach includes assertive efforts to consider race, language, socioeconomic status, special needs, and equity throughout all stages of the process, from design through publication and dissemination (see Appendix E).

Third, our structure purposefully includes formal processes for engaging and communicating frequently with partners and stakeholders. Input from stakeholders—including local educators, community members, families, and students—is essential to developing useful projects, interpreting data, and building collective knowledge. Stakeholders, who may vary depending on the focus of individual studies, will be invited to provide feedback.

Fourth, the Consortium will work closely and consistently with the RPP Advisory Committee. We will seek feedback when a project is initiated, provide regular project updates, conduct a pre-publication presentation of findings, and solicit input on public release of findings in user-friendly formats. Further discussion is provided in the Advisory Committee Collaboration section below.

Fifth, the Consortium is committed to ensuring data security and privacy. The Data Management and Security Plan (Appendix F) describes the state-of-the-art equipment and processes that will be used to secure data, such as a "safe desktop" that limits data access to authorized and authenticated researchers. Data plan details will be finalized based on the Master Research Service Agreement. More information on data management and security appears in the Data Use and Protection section below.

Finally, the Consortium’s structure is adaptable so that we can assemble expert research teams to address specific topics and engage in meaningful discussions about the evidence with multiple constituencies, including OSSE, school district leaders, school teachers and leaders, parents and families, youth, and community stakeholders. These aren’t hollow promises; we have built the necessary processes into our organizational structure to make sure they happen.

Knowledge and Expertise

Expertise in Education Research for Urban School Districts and States

The Consortium encompasses a remarkable depth and breadth of technical and content expertise (see Appendix B). We also bring extensive experience in conducting and disseminating research that is relevant to state education systems and urban districts. Each organization within the Consortium has worked with DC schools, education agencies and other government entities, as well as with other complex urban districts and state education agencies across the nation. In the sections that follow, we describe our organizations’ prior experience along with lessons we have learned from previous collaborative research. Examples of relevant research artifacts are included in Appendix L.

Urban District Experience and Expertise

Consortium researchers work in complex urban systems. A sample of projects illustrates the range of our collaborations with urban districts. For example, GSEHD’s Dr. Matt Shirrell is analyzing the effect of same-race teachers on students’ academic, disciplinary and persistence outcomes for Black and Latinx students in New York City Public Schools. Using 10 years (2007-2017) of student and teacher data from the NYC Department of Education, City University of New York (CUNY) administrative data, and National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data on college enrollment, the study will examine the long-run impacts of student-teacher ethnoracial matching from kindergarten through college.

In a study of school leadership development, GSEHD’s Dr. Rebecca Thessin examined how principal supervisors provided supports to principals in high-need schools in a large urban district. In particular, she observed interactions, interviewed principals, surveyed leadership teams, and analyzed relevant documents. In designing the study, she met with the district’s Deputy and Associate Superintendent at the outset and collaboratively designed the research questions with district partners. Throughout the study she shared updates with district leaders and met with administrators after the 2017-2018 data collection ended to consider next steps and reflect on the findings.

From 2011 to 2019, PSA studied the implementation and effects of the Wallace Foundation’s Principal Pipeline Initiative in six urban school districts. PSA researchers surveyed novice principals and assistant principals, interviewed district officials and key partners, and reviewed administrative records. Regular, interactive briefings with system leaders helped PSA adapt the study design to address issues that emerged during implementation, such as challenges around the role of assistant principals.

From 2012 to 2015, GSEHD’s Dr. Joshua Glazer led a study of Tennessee’s state-run Achievement School District (ASD), which authorizes charter management organizations to design and implement turnaround strategies for low-performing schools. The research was intentionally designed to encourage knowledge-sharing and organizational learning at the district level.

In an NSF-funded study, Howard University explored whether technology-enhanced professional development provided 3rd and 5th grade science teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to prepare and inspire students to become more interested and motivated to pursue careers in STEM

fields. The 2017-2019 project targeted low-income African American students from three high need schools in the District. Researchers used a mixed methods research design, collected focus group and survey data, and conducted classroom observations to determine if the foreground variables of students' sense of belonging and engagement were interrelated.

State Education Agency Experience and Expertise

Consortium researchers also work with state agencies to inform evidence-based policymaking and evaluate newly implemented state programs. For example, in partnership with OSSE, Child Trends collected school climate data from 26 middle and high schools across the District from 2016-2020, as part of an implementation evaluation of the Youth Suicide Prevention and School Climate Measurement Act.

From 2014 to 2015 and again in 2017, AIR conducted two mixed-methods evaluations of the implementation of Texas's state-mandated curriculum and high school graduation requirements. Funded by the Texas Education Agency, the study estimated the effect of the new requirements on graduation rates, college readiness, college admissions, college completion, workforce certificates, employment rates, and earnings. Subsequently, AIR and the state agency were awarded an Institute for Education Science grant (2017-2022) to conduct additional evaluations.

AIR has worked with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education since 2015 to develop a systemic research-driven strategy to build evidence for rapid school improvement strategies. AIR provided formative feedback to the lowest-performing schools in the state, approximately 60 schools annually, through mixed-method monitoring visits and an individually tailored report that provided feedback on school turnaround practices. Working with the state, AIR conducts analyses to inform state and district supports for these schools.

Since 2012, Howard University has implemented and evaluated a Math Science Partnership professional development program in five DCPS and public charter schools identified by OSSE as low-performing schools. Capstone Institute staff provided teacher training through multiple workshops, summer institutes, classroom observations with debriefings, and other professional learning sessions. The University conducted a quasi-experimental design study to consider growth in teacher's pedagogical knowledge and practices as well as changes in student engagement and academic performance.

Research on Whole Child Development

GSEHD professor Dr. Lionel Howard and other GW colleagues examined the frequency and psychological effects of daily racial discrimination experienced by Black youth. The researchers gathered data in 2014 and 2015 from six DC classrooms. The analysis, which was recently highlighted in an [interactive New York Times article](#), found that, on average, students faced over five experiences of racial discrimination per day. The internet was the most frequent source, and these daily experiences led to short-term increases in depressive symptoms.

Faculty from GW's School of Public Health partnered with DCPS to assist in the scientific measurement of physical activity among DC students and examine its association with health and education outcomes. In addition, health researchers collaborated with Rochester Public Schools to conduct a quasi-experimental evaluation of integrated physical education curriculum and a multi-sensory approach to teaching math concepts that incorporates physical exercise.

Through an NIMHD-funded project aimed at reducing violence in the African American community, Howard University studied whether strengthening protective factors, such as community ties and sense of purpose, can prevent violence in African American young men. From 2013-2019, the program enrolled 120 local youth and young adults each year, split between Howard and Hampton University sites, and delivered an evidence-based personal development and violence prevention program and curriculum.

Similarly, GW School of Public Health faculty conducted an NIMHD-funded study of community factors related to youth violence in the Washington-area Latino community. From 2012 to 2017, the research team partnered with students, families, school leaders, community partners and others to examine the factors leading to health and educational disparities affecting immigrant and refugee communities. The team also designed and tested community-driven interventions to mitigate these disparities.

GW's CHCS interviewed state leaders and community coalitions to identify factors that support the implementation and sustainability of school-connected social, emotional, and behavioral programs and interventions for children. The inquiry led to the development of an action guide, called *Partner Build Grow*, and an online toolkit.

Lessons Learned

Three primary lessons emerge from Consortium members' urban and state research that will guide our future work with an RPP. First, however good our research might be, if it sits on a shelf or in a computer file, it is not a successful project. RPP effectiveness requires turning the findings from qualitative and quantitative projects into tools, training materials, and policy proposals that will significantly improve educational and life experiences for children and families. Second, disseminating research findings and related tools is never a one-time event. In a busy and information-rich world, practitioners need specific opportunities and active engagement to integrate research into their leadership and instructional strategies. Third, many if not most research designs must have flexibility to permit a nimble response to newly emerging issues and opportunities, so that the findings are relevant to real-world priorities.

Expertise in Partnering with Government

Consortium members have served as research and evaluation partners to government entities that support DC's children and families, including OSSE, the Office of the DME, DCPS, the Public Charter School Board and charter schools as well as other District agencies that partner to deliver school-connected supports, such as the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH). Below we highlight examples of research that was done in close collaboration with DC government, that has helped to build partner capacity, or that was conducted in long-term partnerships.

Conducting Research in Collaboration with DC Government

Child Trends conducted a system-wide program evaluation of the DCPS Early Childhood program. This work included classroom observations in a representative sample of 111 Title I early childhood classrooms, direct child assessments, and a comparison of schools participating in the Tools of the Mind curriculum with schools using other curricula. The research team provided technical assistance to DCPS's Office of Early Childhood Education to analyze the study data.

Child Trends also contracted with OSSE to conduct a needs assessment of communities served by Head Start and Early Head Start across DC. The initial community needs assessment, to be completed by August 2020, will include a special focus on children with disabilities, children experiencing

homelessness or in foster care, and children and families in two DC wards with the lowest household income and high shares of children under the age of 5.

PSA has served as a research and evaluation partner to OSSE and the Office of the DME. For example, in 2017, PSA partnered with the DME's office and local community organizations to survey parents and older youths about the goals for the District's out-of-school time (OST) system. PSA researchers worked closely with the DME's office to refine survey approaches and briefed the DC OST Commission—a public body of community members and government agency representatives.

In 2012, AIR worked with OSSE to conduct a quality review of special education service delivery. The study was designed to inform the District's capacity-building strategy and develop quality program indicators. These indicators were the basis for a web-based self-assessment tool for LEAs and schools. Researchers gathered stakeholder input from a series of community forums held with educators, community advocates, and families. Each study participant received a tailored report on the findings.

Consortium members have partnered together on projects in the District. Child Trends, in partnership with PSA, GW's CHHCS, and the Healthy Schools Campaign, conducted a mixed-methods evaluation of the DC Healthy Schools Act (HSA), a citywide initiative to improve the nutrition and physical education standards in DC schools. The team used secondary administrative data, primary quantitative data, and qualitative interview data to better understand the implementation of the HSA as well as the potential relationship with student academic and health outcomes. The team also worked closely with OSSE to develop and validate a new version of the Health and Physical Education Assessment.

Building Partner Capacity

Consortium partners have long-term experience in building the capacity of state and district partners through collaborative research. For example, since 2017 PSA has advised the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) on the design of cross-state work groups to promote sharing, learning, and collaboration on shared problems of practice. For CCSSO's work groups on school leadership, PSA provided states with trend analysis and examples of state progress, priorities, and challenges, helping states stay abreast of effective strategies. PSA continues to develop support materials and presentations for the CCSSO's member states.

GW's CHHCS is partnering with DBH, DCPS, public charter schools, and OSSE to develop and lead the DC School Behavioral Health Community of Practice. The community of practice is designed to support and build the competencies of school personnel, clinicians from community-based organizations who work in schools, and other key personnel and community members to implement best practices in school behavioral health.

Through a partnership with the Bainum Family Foundation, CHHCS is working to increase mental health supports for children and families living in Wards 7 and 8. Center staff are providing technical assistance and consultation to help educators in four charter schools address the social and emotional needs of their students. Through the interactive work the team has developed a readiness tool and a best practice indicator checklist to accelerate the assessment and adoptions of school practices in family and community engagement, data-driven decision making, and the incorporation of multi-tiered student-centered interventions.

Howard University is currently supporting OSSE's implementation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers by providing academic enrichment services for elementary and middle school students in Wards

1, 4, 5, and 6. University faculty train school site leaders in STEM enrichment activities and share their STEM backgrounds with students. The support includes youth mentoring sessions on socioemotional competences for students in grades 6-8.

Child Trends, in partnership with the DC Office of Human Rights, worked to adapt an existing teen-pregnancy prevention program for high school students so that it would focus on developing healthy relationships to prevent bullying for middle school students. The project involved designing and piloting the curriculum with DC youth and in DC schools. The curriculum will be available for all DC schools in the 2020-2021 school year.

GSEHD's Dr. Curtis Pyke helped launch the DC STEM Network in 2015. As a member of the Network's leadership team, he partnered with OSSE, DCPS, public charter school leaders, and local stakeholders to develop a research-based process to identify and recognize high-quality STEM schools and increase access to these schools. The team conducted a landscape survey of STEM schools locally and nationally, designed a school questionnaire, and developed a method of validating school status through observations and interviews.

Long-term Research Partnerships

Consortium partners have experience engaging in long-term research partnerships with government agencies. For example, Child Trends has worked with the DC Office of Human Rights since 2014 to support implementation of the DC Youth Bullying Prevention Act in youth-serving agencies. The team audits youth agencies' policies for compliance and provides training, technical assistance, and analyses. Based on needs identified through the work, they have created a training toolkit, "tip sheets" and briefs, a monthly newsletter for school bullying points of contact, and other products.

Since 2005, PSA researchers have partnered with the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) to study the implementation and impact of key citywide strategies to support young people, including the city's Out of School Time system. PSA researchers worked with DYCD leaders at each stage of research and dissemination to ensure that priority questions were addressed and that findings informed agency actions. PSA conducted a series of three evaluations of DYCD's Cornerstone Mentoring Program, which targets youth at risk of dropping out of school. Throughout the studies, DYCD leaders provided insights on the context for emerging findings, discussed appropriate evaluation questions and measures, and acknowledged challenges in implementation. PSA also facilitated learning sessions with mentoring program directors to help translate the findings into actionable strategies.

Since 2007, AIR has worked closely with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) to administer the Conditions for Learning (CFL) survey to the district's elementary, middle, and high school students. Over time, AIR developed a web-based survey platform, redesigned the survey, and developed new data-editing procedures, among other enhancements. AIR also produces user-friendly reports of the results, assists district staff and principals in understanding the results, and works with district staff to develop school-level targets to promote positive school climate.

Plan to Leverage Best Practices of RPPs

Our Consortium can draw on our organizations' central role in and strong connections with the National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships (NNERPP), our members' research on RPPs, and our experience working in research partnerships in states and cities across the country.

GW and AIR are founding members of NNERPP and their scholars have participated in each annual conference. Howard University faculty also attended in 2019. We have strong relationships with many NNERPP members and call on their expertise often. In developing our Consortium, we spoke with executive directors, research directors, communications specialists, and data managers from the UChicago Consortium on School Research, Baltimore Education Research Consortium, Houston Education Research Consortium, Education Research Alliance of New Orleans, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Research Partnerships, Stanford-San Francisco Unified School District Partnership, and the Tennessee Education Research Alliance. All were generous in their support and, with their permission, we drew from their written procedures and lessons learned as we shaped our approach to serving DC.

We invited members of the Network—John Easton (Chicago), Nate Schwartz (formerly Tennessee), Laura Wentworth (San Francisco)—and Carl Cohn, former superintendent of Long Beach School District, to serve as partnership advisors to our Consortium. Their letters of support are included in Appendix G. Should we serve as DC’s partner, we will seek their advice early and invite them to share their expertise on RPPs through a formal convening with DC stakeholders.

Moreover, Consortium members have studied RPPs, and their findings directly shape our activities. GW’s Dr. Glazer led research into the design and implementation of RPPs in two East Coast urban districts (Glazer et al., 2018). This project examined ways in which research can support district learning, types of research that best facilitates learning, and ways in which districts and researchers can work constructively together. PSA has led or participated in two national evaluations of the RELs and two national evaluations of the Comprehensive Centers. AIR’s Dr. Julie Kochanek, a member of our Stewardship Group and an early member of the Chicago Consortium, co-authored an article (Kochanek et al., 2015) describing a theory of action for using knowledge within partnerships, based on her team’s experience working with eight Midwest REL research alliances.

Our members’ experience with research partnerships is extensive. AIR is a research partner in over 35 RPPs, including Regional Education Lab (REL)-supported RPPs with state education agencies and RPPs with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and the Boston Public Schools. PSA is a partner in the work of RELs in the Midwest and West and was recently awarded the five-year federal grant for the Region 4 Comprehensive Center. The Center provides evidence-based assistance to build capacity for educational improvement in DC and four other states.

Philosophy

Our working philosophy for this partnership is “mutually beneficial collaborations” (Coburn et al., 2013). The useful back-and-forth engagement among practitioners and researchers is what distinguishes an RPP from traditional researcher-as-consultant models. Consortium researchers have been part of multiple collaborative research teams and know from experience that it takes effort and attention to make research useful and beneficial for practitioners. It also requires the good will and attention of practitioners to share the nuances of their context with researchers and to coordinate joint work with researchers. Our Consortium partnership, operations, proposed approaches and personality are built to make mutually beneficial collaborations a reality.

As mentioned in the Mission and Vision sections above, the RPP is designed to produce trusted, credible, and useful evidence from research; *and* to engage with educators and leaders to help apply that knowledge. Dr. Glazer’s and Dr. Kochanek’s research, referenced previously, both stress the necessity of formal approaches to collaborative learning. For example, in the early stages of the

partnership a “structured workshop” method helps a large group of stakeholders identify common goals and develop a representative research agenda. Once findings are available, holding small meetings of trusted partners to consider and explore the implications of research helps both researchers and practitioners integrate the new information with their own knowledge.

We know that state, district, and school staff do not have time to read and interpret lengthy research reports. Therefore, our goal is to condense research findings into infographics and briefs that are easily digested and can be quickly read, shared, and discussed. We will also brief administrators on study findings to facilitate discussions about what the findings mean for the agency’s next steps. When study findings are more relevant to school staff, we will sponsor workshops where school teams can hear about the findings, discuss the implications for their practice, and take time to prepare for next steps. We will look for foundation, federal, and local funding sources to support tangible research products that are useful and relevant to our practitioner partners. In connecting with a large number of stakeholders across many different projects, we will establish formal processes such as stakeholder research advisory groups and touchpoint timelines for research teams to follow to ensure the quality of the partnership.

Networks

Our Consortium is a partnership of two universities and three research organizations with roots in the District. Our Consortium teaming agreement is included in Appendix H and represents our combined commitment to partnership and to collaborative research in a DC RPP. GW has years of experience in leading multi-institution, multi-disciplinary research partnerships. The DC Center for AIDS Research (DC CFAR) at the School of Public Health leads a collaboration of four local universities, three local health centers, and the DC Health Department in a wide range of HIV research projects. For the last decade, the GW team has maintained a diverse community advisory board that has actively participated in all aspects of the research endeavor, and from which the DC RPP can glean lessons.

Each Consortium has working relationships and partnerships with state and district leaders around the country, national and local nonprofit organizations, national and local funders, and multiple advocacy and research organizations. These

Table 1. Current and Former Local Partners

100 Fathers Inc.
Access Youth
Advocates for Justice and Education, Inc.
After-School All-Stars
Children’s Law Center
Children’s National Hospital
Critical Exposure
DC SCORES
DC STEM Network
ECIN (Early Childhood Innovation Network)
EdForward
For Love of Children
Higher Achievement
Horton’s Kids
Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic
Latin American Youth Center (LAYC)
Martha’s Table
Mary’s Center
MedStar Georgetown WISE Center
Metro TeenAIDS (Whitman Walker Health)
National Center for Children and Families
PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education)
Peer Forward National Capital Region
Perry School Community Services Program
RaiseDC
Sasha Bruce Youthworks
School Talk
SMYAL
The School Club of Washington
Transcend
Turnaround for Children
Turning the Page
Urban Alliance
Venture Philanthropy Partners
Wendt Center for Loss and Healing

networks provide rich knowledge and experience that can serve the RPP through formal and informal collaborations. A list of many current and former local partners is included in Table 1.

The potency of two local partnerships, with Children’s National and Children’s Law Center, two valued DC institutions, are described in their letters of support in Appendix J. Both institutions bring distinct analytical training and methodological approaches that deepen root cause analyses and enrich our understanding of possible remedies to the complex problems vulnerable populations face. In particular, our partnership with Children’s National highlights the crossover work between GW researchers and pediatric faculty that can enhance children’s education and health outcomes. This multidisciplinary research would have implications for many identified school and health concerns, for example, student attendance and achievement, early childhood development and readiness for kindergarten, problems of social and emotional regulation and bullying, and identification and interventions for students with disabilities.

Our Consortium is structured to be open to new partners. We will create Consortium and non-Consortium teams as best serves the needs of DC and the research. We especially look forward to the possibility of partnering with local research groups, such as The Lab @ DC and the DC Policy Center, which would supplement the RPP through their knowledge of DC and skilled research. Our research process builds in connections with stakeholders and partners for *each* research project. These topic-specific advisory groups are intended to be flexible even as they are part of the RPP structure. Our goal is to provide usable research, and toward that end we will reach out to prospective partners and partnerships.

In addition, through our work and interests we have formed networks with personnel in several DC government agencies, including DME, OSSE, DCPS, PCSB, DBH, DOH, Office of Public Health, and Office of Human Rights. Members of the Consortium have worked with DC Council members and staff through presenting testimony at hearings or partnering on issues of concern before the District.

These working relationships with agency and government leaders increase our understanding of local government, local context and the education sector’s strengths and challenges. They also enable us to draw on the expertise of multiple agencies in addressing those challenges. For example, in light of emerging national data showing a link between chronic health needs and school attendance, it would be helpful to research that issue locally with data or input from multiple agencies.

Expertise in Coordinating and Conducting Community Outreach

Consistent and authentic community outreach is a pillar of RPP success. It is central to our mission of generating useful evidence and meaningful engagement. As described in our statement on equity in research practices (Appendix E), using an equity lens means the research serves local goals as defined by the local community. It also means that research attends to the social, structural, and historical context of local strengths and challenges. This necessitates proactive steps to listen and learn from community members as research is initiated and as findings are interpreted, published, and used.

One of the primary ways we will coordinate with community members is through creating stakeholder advisory groups for specific research projects. Depending on the focus of individual studies, relevant stakeholders will be invited to provide feedback that is vital for the quality and utility of partnership work. For example, if the research is related to classroom instruction, teachers would be part of a stakeholder advisory group that helps researchers understand context that might impact research design and dissemination; employers would be included in an advisory group related to research on

workforce preparation; or, parents would help researchers take note of underappreciated aspects of family engagement.

Examples of the various community engagement strategies used by Consortium members demonstrate our determination to reach out to members of the community and involve them integrally in the RPP’s practices. We know that constant and creative engagement is the only way to build trust and affirm that the RPP is working for everyone in the community. For example, in partnership with Children’s National, GW supports Science Café 360 at DC’s Busboys and Poets (Brookland) coffee shop. Science Café hosts casual weekday evening conversations among researchers, community members, and social scientists. Researchers demystify what they do and community members share ideas that come from living the experience. In another example, Howard University has held school-based community forums to share the “hows and whys” of school-focused research and discuss the supports needed and possible benefits. On past projects Consortium researchers have created broadly accessible communities of practice, posted short video presentations of research findings, produced podcasts on particular education issues, held weekend workshops, and established clearinghouse information centers on specific education topics. The Consortium will incorporate community engagement and dissemination strategies into a continuous improvement cycle, through which we test and refine our strategies to ensure they adequately serve stakeholders.

Partnership Personnel and Collaboration

Current Personnel

As a large research university, GW provides soup-to-nuts support of research activities. Several GW administrative offices contribute services to the Consortium—Research, Research Integrity, Financial Planning, IT, Business Analytics, Development, and External Relations, and GSEHD’s Finance, Research Administration, and External Partnership offices. These services are not directly included in our staffing plan but are among the many advantages offered to research centers based at GW. A simplified GW organization chart is provided in Appendix J.

GW’s GSEHD will lead the administration and management of the Consortium. GSEHD has 93 faculty members and 68 staff positions. Although GW and our partners have hundreds of researchers on staff, we are proposing to launch with a purposefully lean organization, with ample capacity and agility to augment our team as the RPP grows. As shown in Figure 2, the RPP will be led by GW and a Consortium Stewardship Group with representatives from each of our five partner organizations. The Stewardship Group is led by a single member of each organization, but more experts contribute to guiding our activities. For example, eleven Consortium members have been working together for more than a year to develop our

Figure 2. Consortium Organization Chart



RPP approach. The Consortium organization chart in Figure 2 shows the GSEHD-based positions and the Stewardship Group leads.

As research-oriented organizations, we have dozens of experts within the Consortium who are conducting qualitative or quantitative research in education. Across three graduate schools within GW, we count 62 faculty members conducting education research. Among Consortium partners, AIR has 175 senior researchers contributing to education studies, Child Trends has 51 senior researchers, Howard University has over 45 education scholars, and PSA employs 10 full-time researchers.

Personnel Dedicated to the Partnership

One of the most valuable aspects of a sustained research partnership is the core group of researchers who build long-term relationships with stakeholders, become deeply knowledgeable about local data, and are sensitive to local conditions. As an early member of the Chicago Consortium explained in a conversation with GW staff, “Good research questions came from understanding one place well.” We structured our Consortium with that in mind.

The Consortium will begin with a few staff and, over time, build a core team of researchers dedicated to DC schools research. The Consortium will be led by an Executive Director and supported by a Data Manager and Project Manager as well as by a Partnership and Communications Associate in later years. Stewardship Group members round out the leadership team. The responsibilities for each position are as follows:

- *Executive Director*—DC’s primary point of contact; responsible for management and administration; supervises research activities; conducts research; leads fundraising.
- *Data Manager*—Oversees data archive; works with OSSE and other agency data leads; provides and monitors data access permissions, ensures data quality, and documents data and use.
- *Partnership and Communications Associate*—Supports outreach, partnerships, and relationship-building; works with stakeholders on research dissemination and communications.
- *Project Manager*—Staffs the RPP Advisory Committee and provides project support.
- *Stewardship Group*—Senior researchers steer Consortium research and ensure alignment with District expectations, RPP quality standards, and the research process.

Our vision is to have two full-time researchers join the RPP in the first five years. The number of RPP-dedicated researchers will increase over the 10-year timeframe, as funding allows. We anticipate that 30 or more contributing experts from across the Consortium will regularly provide research and topic area expertise. These contributing experts will devote a portion of their time to particular projects, as needed, but will not be full-time staff of the Consortium. While working on a DC study they will be teaching courses or logging hours on other projects. Graduate students from GW and Howard University will also provide part-time research support. Thus, there are three research staff categories: RPP-dedicated researchers (full-time), contributing experts (faculty, senior researchers, and research assistants) and graduate student researchers. Table 2 (next page) shows a staffing plan with the positions, their full-time or part-time status in Consortium work, and the timeline for joining the partnership.

Staffing for research projects will depend on the nature of the inquiry and expertise needed. For example, a qualitative study related to mental health in schools might be staffed by five researchers—two RPP-dedicated researchers, two graduate students, and one contributing expert in school-based mental health services from our Consortium team. Or alternately, we may conduct a quantitative study

using a complex methodology and establish a team of four researchers—one RPP-dedicated researcher, one part-time methodological expert, and two research assistants. The Consortium is purposefully built to be able to draw from the considerable content and methodological expertise in each partner organization. Also, the Consortium structure supports flexibility in determining research teams. As desired, research teams may call on additional experts from outside the Consortium.

As a Consortium, we are committed to embodying our equity goals by employing a diverse staff and by training and supporting researchers from diverse backgrounds. We will seek out and hire Consortium staff through equity-focused hiring practices.

Table 2. Proposed RPP Staffing Plan

Position	Personnel	FTE	Timeline				
			Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Key Personnel							
Executive Director	Dr. Elizabeth Grant	FT	•	•	•	•	•
Data Manager	TBD	FT	•	•	•	•	•
Partnership and Communications Associate	TBD	FT			•	•	•
Project Manager	TBD	FT	•	•	•	•	•
Stewardship Group	Dr. Michael Feuer, GSEHD Dr. Julie Kochanek, AIR Dr. Deborah Temkin, Child Trends Dr. Wade Boykin, Howard U. Dr. Brenda Turnbull, PSA	PT	•	•	•	•	•
Research Personnel							
RPP-dedicated Researcher		FT		•	•	•	•
RPP-dedicated Researcher		FT					•
Contributing Experts (Faculty, Senior Researchers & Research Assistants)		PT	•	•	•	•	•
Graduate Student Researchers		PT	•	•	•	•	•

Advisory Committee Collaboration

The DC RPP Advisory Committee will guide the work of the RPP. Our watchword for Committee and RPP interaction is collaboration. The collaborative processes described below are intended to effectively use Committee members' substantive expertise and intellectual guidance in the research, or *evidence-generation* process, as well as in the *engagement* of stakeholders and the community. Together, we will co-develop an agenda for research and co-determine indicators of success.

We believe in-person meetings of the Advisory Committee are critical to moving the work forward, even as we will take advantage of webinars, conference calls, and email communication updates to regularly inform and communicate with Committee members. In the first year, we propose eight in-person meetings: two start-up meetings and then six in-person meetings annually thereafter. Over the first two meetings, we will work with the Committee to determine leadership and operating structures, clarify common objectives, and establish working rules or by-laws to set the early conditions for success. We can then begin to prioritize learning topics and problems of practice, build shared knowledge of DC education data, and refine and prioritize research questions. The goal is to create a coherent and actionable agenda that will direct RPP research during the first five years. We will post timely notices of

meetings along with agendas and minutes on the RPP web site. With the assumption that the Advisory Committee is a public board, we will work with the DC Offices of Open Government and Disability Rights to support transparent and accessible meetings.

One first step will be to think in terms of developing a “learning agenda.” A learning agenda is slightly broader than a research agenda in that it takes note of existing evidence while also generating new knowledge and approaches to program improvement. Thinking in terms of a learning agenda helps to identify more clearly what is known and where there are gaps in our knowledge. A learning agenda also captures a range of learning activities that can inform decision making, such as literature reviews or expert learning sessions that delve deeply into specific instructional topics. The learning agenda approach will help the Advisory Committee suggest the learning products—such as infographics, quick summaries, tools, online dashboards, podcasts, and in-person workshops—that best serve stakeholders and increase public dissemination and engagement.

To develop a learning agenda and a more specific 5-year research agenda, the RPP will work with the Advisory Committee to gather input from education agencies, school leaders and teachers, community members, and other stakeholders. We will use strategies such as focus groups, interviews, discussion groups, and expert convenings. RPP research focuses on “problems of practice”—specific challenges practitioners face that are directly observable, actionable, and connected to broader improvement strategies. In working meetings with the Advisory Committee, RPP researchers will help with the technical challenge of formulating researchable questions that can inform problems of practice and ensure that study methods are aligned with the questions and the available data. The Consortium team will provide examples of other RPPs’ research and outreach, and other state- and district-focused studies, as background to our new collaborative efforts.

As mentioned previously, the Consortium will encourage the Advisory Committee to consider identifying a few focus areas, and a series of studies within each focus area, that will help build local bodies of knowledge related to key challenges. A number of studies on a single topic can be particularly helpful to policymakers. With the research agenda in hand, the RPP will develop a proposed work plan specifying project timing and sequencing. We will then ask the Committee to review the work plan and provide feedback.

The Consortium will use a skilled meeting facilitator to conduct Advisory Committee large-group discussions and decision-making steps. With multiple people at the table, all of whom must have a voice in the proceedings, the task of getting to consensus will be challenging. A skilled facilitator who enters in a neutral and well-defined role will help move the Committee work forward. With the facilitator’s expertise, we will engage members in small-group discussions, such as interest circles, to encourage sharing of ideas and opinions, and in whole-group discussions, managed through formal processes, that encourage common learning and lead to decision making.

Consortium Coordination

We are excited to propose a robust collaboration among our organizations. Consortium members have worked together for months to establish the Consortium’s governance structure and approach. We have designed a collaborative structure that amplifies the expertise of multiple partners while seeking to minimize administration costs. The Consortium is structured with a lead (or “backbone”) organization, a representative Stewardship Group, and multiple, flexible Research Teams as depicted in Figure 3 (next page).

As the lead organization, GW’s GSEHD supports an Executive Director and other staff that are responsible for RPP operational functions. The Executive Director and staff serve as the point-of-contact for DC agencies and community organizations and manage relationships with other stakeholders. The GW team also manages the Partnership’s central agreements on essential matters such as data sharing. The team will convene Advisory Committee and other Partnership meetings, lead RPP communications and research dissemination activities, manage research teams and project timelines, and facilitate meetings.

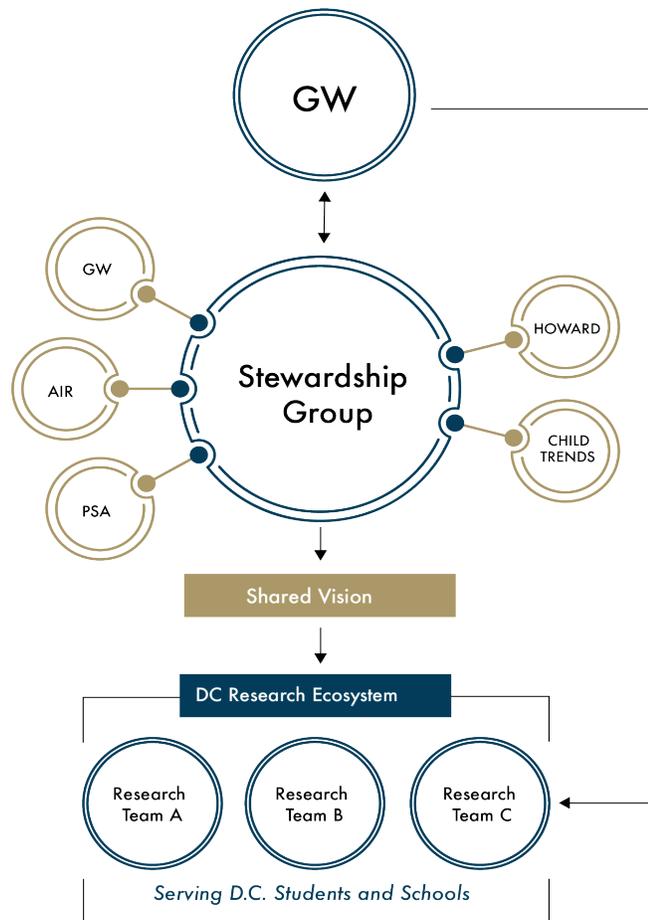
The Stewardship Group has the overarching task of maintaining the RPP vision and strategic direction while ensuring that our work remains consistent with that shared vision. Each partner organization—GW, AIR, Child Trends, Howard University, and PSA—is represented on the Stewardship Group. The Executive Director and Stewardship Group are responsible for coordinating efforts and resources across projects, supporting research teams, and developing relationships with key partners. The Group chair will be drawn from one of the partners and will rotate annually. Decisions of the Group are made through consensus rather than majority rule. By accord, the Stewardship Group will:

- Approve research plans and subsequent RPP publications;
- Determine the scope of the work of Research Teams, including approval of specific research projects and lead partners; and
- Evaluate the progress of the Consortium and the Research Teams.

As partners we will focus on meaningful and measurable action relevant to the District’s 5-year research agenda rather than on individual partner interests, an approach known as “mission over organization.” As evidenced by the substantial cost-share contributions pledged by each organization, partners agree to make time and provide the resources necessary to sustain the Consortium and improve its operations over time.

A subset of the Stewardship Group will serve on a Research Review Group (RRG)—a team of researchers that provides feedback to project teams at specific stages of the work. The RRG oversees research quality and processes as described in detail in Appendix C, the Research Process. The goals of the RRG are to ensure that Consortium research and products are coherent and of high technical quality, and use an equity lens. In summary, the RRG will review and approve study plans to ensure rigor of methodology

Figure 3. Consortium Structure and Coordination



and analysis, check in regularly with individual projects, review penultimate study drafts, and evaluate the evidence, framing, clarity, organization, equity considerations and implications in the draft. The RRG's oversight does not stand in for the individual partner quality assurance processes required by each organization. Anticipated costs of the review will be included in project proposals.

Finally, research is conducted by Research Teams. Each research team has a lead partner that manages the individual project and assembles the expert team of researchers. Each team is project-specific and fluid, in that teams form and disband to create the best possible team to address the research questions. The Research Team lead serves as fiscal and legal authority, as needed. A team can include outside experts who are not currently part of the Consortium but who may lend expertise to the study. In this way, the Consortium maintains an inclusive, or "big tent," approach to working with a variety of research experts rather than excluding participation from non-Consortium researchers. Specific Consortium projects will be separately negotiated and set forth in project agreements with OSSE.

Research Team leads are able to secure additional funding for specific research projects. In this way, they can work with current funder relationships to expand projects of interest or explore new projects aligned with the Advisory Committee research agenda, all while maintaining the agreements and vision of the Consortium. In these cases, Research Team budgets will include a small "administrative fee" to support Consortium operations.

Data Use & Protection/Research Methods

Expertise in Data Security

Data are a critical resource. GW has long experience and broad expertise in securing and storing private regulated data. The University has extensive procedures to safeguard internal administrative data as well as externally-acquired data. GW maintains the privacy of personal information and complies with the requirements of privacy laws and regulations, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA), and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Throughout the performance of operations, GW safeguards the generation, collection, use, storage, disposal, and disclosure of personal information in accordance with best practices and as required by applicable laws and regulations. GW data security tools and technologies are designed and implemented to protect information from unauthorized access, use, misuse, disclosure, destruction, modification, or disruption. GW's Information and Security Compliance team works closely with the university community to protect information in GW's custody by conducting security risk assessments, classifying data, and identifying proper safeguards.

GW will establish a secure data archive and analytical computing environment that will provide limited-access, research-ready data for RPP and OSSE use. The RPP data archive will comply with OSSE data policies, GW data policies, FERPA, and other related federal regulations. The Consortium will work with OSSE to establish a data governance policy for the RPP. Further, if desired, we would open the data archive (or portions of the data archive) to external data requests to reduce the burden on agencies. In collaboration with OSSE, we would create access procedures as well as a review protocol for requests to ensure quality and alignment with the District's priorities.

Data Management and Security Plan

GW submits a Data Management and Security Plan as Appendix F. The plan includes protocols for data security and storage, data collection, roles and responsibilities, data access, data documentation and

metadata, and data destruction. As noted in the plan, details would be finalized based on the Master Research Services Agreement.

Validity

As described in the Research Process (Appendix C), the Consortium has set out a series of quality review activities for each stage of research. Most importantly, we have established an internal Research Review Group to ensure quality, reliability, and validity in data and methodology. The RRG is modeled on a similar team at the Chicago Consortium for School Research. In some cases, as determined by the Stewardship Group, we may also choose to ask outside experts to review methodologies or draft findings. The Consortium has no known challenges to research outcomes based on the validity of research methods.

GW's Office of Human Research oversees the GW Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and supports researchers in conducting ethical research by providing guidance, education, and oversight for the protection of human subjects. IRB processes adhere to all federal regulations. Researchers will complete the IRB process for any research involving human subjects, including those that use student- or other individual-level data. Each Consortium partner has a similar organization IRB process that follows federal regulations and may be used to review and approve research projects.

In addition, GW partners with the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) to provide human subjects research training online. Consortium researchers are *required* to complete initial human subjects training before being listed as a team member on a research protocol. Continuing training is required at least every two years through the CITI Program.

Data Quality

Consortium researchers have extensive data management and analysis experience. They will review data for completeness; internal consistency; implausible, illogical, or missing values; comparability with existing data/estimates; and valid linking with existing data sets (where applicable). The team has experience in the review, editing, cleaning, and assembly of multiple data files (including data files from NCES, the CRDC, *EDFacts*, multiple federal agencies, state education agencies, local education agencies, independent evaluations and university-based research projects). The team is well versed in identifying and resolving data issues and will use this experience to clean and process the data (e.g., removing implausible values, making logical edits, and imputing missing data) when needed.

In addition, we will create formal data documentation. We will produce a data codebook and will record all data assembly steps, data limitations, data anomalies (e.g., data elements that fail one or more data quality checks), and edits or recommendations for data cleaning (correction, suppression, editing, imputation, or notation). For quality assurance, the creation of the data sets and the data quality review results, and the documentation, will be verified by an independent analyst who did not work on these steps.

Independence

The Consortium has established a Statement on Independence and Neutrality that will guide the actions of researchers and staff (Appendix D). The statement makes clear that the Consortium will maintain independence in order to serve as a trusted research partner. Several factors help us maintain that independence. The Consortium will conduct internal reviews at each stage of a study. The 21-member Advisory Committee provides diverse perspectives and reviews penultimate drafts of each study;

however, editorial authority over study findings resides with the authors. In addition, researchers participating in Consortium work sign a conflict of interest statement. Finally, Consortium members are dedicated to the mission of being valuable partners because of our standards of high-quality research and independent analysis.

As part of that independence, research studies will be made public and broadly disseminated to promote transparency and community accessibility. We will publish research methods and analysis plans at the start of each study. The public information will include a project summary, timelines, status updates, and next steps. Additionally, the RPP website will post the 5-year research agenda; and research study findings; and, will publish annual reports. The website will also list private and public funders of RPP research and operations.

The Research Process (Appendix C) outlines steps researchers and the Stewardship Group will take to ensure research quality and transparency. The RRG, as described in the Consortium Collaboration section above, plays a primary role in ensuring accountability. Other accountability and transparency measures include obtaining the approval of OSSE before engaging in research projects with DC data, informing the Advisory Committee and seeking input before the initiation of research, sharing early findings and soliciting feedback with the Advisory Committee, and instituting a “no surprises” process so that findings are presented to select partners before publication.

Financial Management and Proposed Budget

Financial Management

GW upholds and promotes a culture of integrity and ethical behavior internally and across external projects. GW’s Office of Sponsored Projects ensures financial and research integrity compliance throughout the life of research projects and will assign an administrator who will regularly review RPP financial and research activities. GW’s financial management systems mitigate risks through continuous budget evaluation. The university uses Oracle Grants Accounting Module to track and monitor program expenditures, invoicing, and reporting. Budget Performance Reports are used to monitor financial activity and a secure online “PI Dashboard” enables real-time budget analysis, timely reporting, and increased financial transparency.

Grants and Contracts Accounting Services (GCAS) in the Comptroller's Office is responsible for sound financial management of sponsored program funds. GCAS will prepare and submit financial reports and invoices to sponsors and coordinate sponsor audits. GCAS will also conduct risk assessment for subrecipients and assist in subrecipient monitoring. GW is audited annually by independent auditors under federal OMB Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F - Audit Requirements.

The Consortium Executive Director will monitor and reconcile financial activity monthly while ensuring compliance with GW and District of Columbia policies and procedures, including federal regulations and policies, DC guidelines and regulations, and GW’s Office of Sponsored Projects procedures. The Executive Director will monitor the activities of subrecipients to ensure that subawards comply with the applicable regulations and subaward terms and conditions. In addition, GSEHD’s financial and grants management leaders and staff will review and report on the project’s financial status.

Potential Sources of Funding

Consortium Contributions

The RPP will begin with a solid financial foundation contributed by Consortium partners. Together, Consortium partners will provide \$310,000 annually over the initial 10 years of the Partnership. This amounts to over \$3 million across the first 10 years. Consortium organization letters of support, documenting the financial contributions, are included in Appendix A.

Plans for Securing Funds

GW and partners are uniquely positioned to work with national and local foundation and other private sources to secure funds for Partnership engagement and research. We will apply for support from national foundations committed to partnership research. The Spencer Foundation's Research-Partnership Grant Program supports collaborative research partnerships with funding of up to \$400,000 over three years. The W.T. Grant Foundation's Institutional Challenge Grant supports partnership research to reduce inequality in youth outcomes with funding of \$650,000 over three years. We have spoken with both foundations about the DC RPP and will reach out again in the first months of the Partnership.

GW and our partner organizations have longstanding relationships with other national foundations, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Arnold Ventures, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Wallace Foundation, and Walton Family Foundation. The foundations have directly supported Consortium researchers, and many have supported research within the RPP structure. We will follow up with these institutions to discuss the new DC RPP and possible support.

According to RPP leaders in Chicago, Houston, Baltimore, and New Orleans, local funders play a critical role in sustaining locally focused RPPs. DC has many generous local philanthropists who have supported DC school improvement. GW leaders—including the Provost and GSEHD Dean—met recently with a number of local funders and community organizations in a formal event to discuss DC's RPP and consider the financial support necessary for research and operations. Generally, local and national funders prefer to commit resources and support after the RPP entity has been named.

We will also pursue doctoral student funding from the Institute of Education Sciences' Predoctoral Interdisciplinary Research Training Program, which supports graduate student researchers through multi-year grants. Howard University and GW will partner to establish inter-university doctoral training cohorts that will together train doctoral students in research methods that serve practitioners' needs. The goals of this combined effort are to train new researchers in collaborative field-based research and to increase researcher diversity.

District Funds

As we secure external funds for Partnership engagement and research, we will look to the District to support these activities in three ways. First, to facilitate meaningful partnership, the RPP will benefit by having a District point-person serve as the primary liaison for the Consortium and a key actor in the RPP. The District leader would execute approvals and the relationship-building needed to support research activities. The liaison would also assist with research and dissemination and help inform the direction of the Partnership. This may require a full-time or nearly full-time position.

Second, the Advisory Committee research agenda will set out a number of consequential research studies and evaluations that will require multi-month or multi-year funding. For fiscal year 2019, the DC Council allocated \$500,000 for the Research Practice Partnership in anticipation of the passage of

related legislation. We believe a similar annual allocation would provide sufficient resources for multiple research studies to support school improvement and successfully execute the research agenda. It may also increase the likelihood of securing additional private support or matching funds for the Advisory Committee and the broader work of the RPP. If DC funding is not available, we will seek private funding to meet research needs.

Third, the guiding RPP legislation requires the creation and ongoing participation of a 21-member Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is central to the work and success of the RPP, so consistent funding is essential. As described previously, we anticipate two meetings with the Committee in the start-up period and six meetings annually in the following years. Yearly meeting costs are estimated at \$20,430, as described in the budget below. Advisory Committee support would signal commitment to the RPP and dedication to District-wide engagement and evidence-informed decision making.

Proposed Budget

The costs for start-up and ongoing operations over the first 10 years of Partnership operation is estimated at \$14,131,505. The proposed budget includes labor costs associated with RPP evidence generation and engagement activities, Advisory Committee meetings, data archive management and security, local travel, publications, communications, consultants and other direct costs. Table 3 (next page) lists the cost for the three-month start-up period and anticipated yearly costs for the first five-year Master Research Services Agreement. The full 10-year budget is included in Appendix K.

Both the 5-year and 10-year budgets present projected, realistic estimates for the purposes of this proposal. The proposed expenses capture the likely costs of a comprehensive research agenda. However, actual RPP expenditures, and the agreed-on scope of work, will align with the funding available for those activities. Details of the budget will be finalized based on the jointly-negotiated terms of the Master Research Services Agreement and secured funding.

Start-up Period

During the three-month start-up period, the RPP will focus on three activities that are central to setting the Partnership on a successful path: 1) establish with OSSE an RPP Master Research Services Agreement; 2) launch the Advisory Committee and support members in establishing by-laws, determining leadership roles, and beginning the critical work of developing a 5-year research agenda; and, 3) engage with stakeholders by reaching out to leaders at OSSE, DCPS, PCSB, individual DCPS and public charter schools, families, and other stakeholders to listen and record their interests in specific research efforts, desires for dissemination, and preferences for ongoing communication.

During this period, the RPP will add key personnel by hiring a Data Manager and Project Manager. We will also work with our GW IT team to refine the GW data archive infrastructure to align with data agreements, develop and begin to implement a local and national fundraising strategy and partner with a consultant to design and build a DC RPP web site.

Table 3. Proposed Budget—Start-up Period and Initial Five Years

Annual Operations

Table 3 presents the proposed annual costs for RPP operations and research for the initial five years. The 10-year budget table is included in Appendix K. During the first year of operation we will jointly develop and publish a research agenda with the Advisory Committee, acquire data sets, complete early studies, develop ongoing communication and outreach plans, and implement the fundraising strategy. In the following years, the RPP will continue early studies and begin new research, continue stakeholder engagement, and build out staff as necessary. Research positions for the Partnership will increase over time as we undertake multiple research studies determined by the Advisory Committee’s research agenda. Each budget line item is explained in greater detail below.

- *Key Personnel*—Key personnel in the RPP leadership will spearhead the design and implementation of research, Advisory Council support and partnership, RPP operations, community engagement, and fundraising as necessary. We will begin with three full-time staff positions (Executive Director, Data Manager and Project Manager) and add additional positions in successive years as shown in the staffing plan above.
- *GW Faculty and Graduate Student Research*—At GW, faculty and graduate student researchers will conduct Consortium research and support RPP engagement.
- *Consortium Partner Research (Subcontracts)*—Consortium partners will conduct research and support engagement under subcontracts.

- *RPP-dedicated Researchers*—Two full-time RPP researchers will join the Consortium in the first five years. Additional RPP-dedicated researchers will be added over subsequent years, as funding allows.
- *Data Archive Infrastructure and Management*: Data archive costs include cloud-based data storage, “virtual desktop” access, secure file sharing, and leading-edge security management.
- *Advisory Committee Support*: We propose two meetings during the start-up period and six meetings annually. We also plan for a half-time project manager to staff the Advisory Committee. Meeting expenses include the fee for a skilled facilitator to ensure productive member engagement and decision making, a recorder to prepare meeting minutes, and costs to ensure that meetings are accessible to the broad public. We also include participant transportation costs, supplies, and simple refreshments. We assume that meeting space will be provided in public meeting rooms or through in-kind support.
- *Communication Design and Production*: Start-up costs support web site development. Annual expenses cover publications, products, and tools that will be designed for accessibility and printed to increase dissemination. RPP publications and web site will be Section 503 compliant.
- *Consulting*: Consultants will support the development of the RPP identity and help design effective communications and engagement strategies that will support stakeholder participation and evidence use.
- *Domestic Travel*: Travel includes costs for local meetings as well as flights and lodging for out-of-town experts to attend topic-area convenings in support of community learning and research use.

Institutional Support

GW and our partners in the Consortium are committed to the success and sustainability of the DC RPP and will apply multiple resources to the Partnership. Each Consortium partner has committed annual in-kind contributions to the RPP that will support Consortium leadership and research.

In addition to the contributions described in the budget narrative, GW provides broad support through University administrative and professional services. The DC RPP can draw on the university-level expertise in the offices of legal counsel, research, finance, development, fundraising, external relations and communications. GW provides consistent financial and grants management support through the Office of Sponsored Projects and the Grants and Contracts Accounting Services described above. Research activities at GW are supported through in-kind donations of time and intellectual university-level expertise in data science, analytics, and specific content areas.

GSEHD also provides direct financial and grants management support through the Office of Research and External Relations. Activities include day-to-day budget support, integrity and compliance monitoring, and coordination of contractual agreements and requirements. The school-level communications team facilitates web site development and maintenance, publications and reproductions, podcast preparation and production, and general communications support. GSEHD will provide necessary office space and general office equipment for the GW-based RPP leadership team and graduate research assistants.

The GW campus has multiple meeting spaces that can support conferences for up to 250 people, including break-out rooms, and an auditorium that seats up to 1500. Conference rooms support phone conferences and many can support videoconferencing. GW will maintain the DC RPP website for posting and disseminating project information and research as an ongoing in-kind contribution.

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